

USDA NATURAL DISASTER DETERMINATION (NDD) PROCESS

DES will coordinate the application process and implementation procedures for USDA Natural Disaster Determinations, assist in formulating any executive orders or proclamations, and act as liaison with other agencies and organizations in developing the natural disaster determination process. The current process is as follows:

- a) The county commissioners must request the governor's staff to initiate the natural disaster determination process in writing;
- b) The Governor's staff prepares a packet including a draft letter for submission to the secretary of agriculture requesting Natural Disaster Determination;
- c) The Governor's staff recommends and prepares draft correspondence for the county commissioners as to the status of their request during the entire process;
- d) The USDA requests damage assessment information from the local CFSA and NRCS offices in the affected areas;
- e) The damage assessment information is returned to the USDA and forwarded to the State Emergency Board (SEB) for assessment and review;
- f) The SEB returns their recommendation to the USDA. The USDA forwards the final information with their recommendation to the Governor; comments are sent to the secretary of agriculture;
- g) The Secretary of Agriculture makes a decision regarding the Governor's request and notifies the Governor of approval or denial of the NDD request;
- h) The Governor then prepares draft correspondence notifying the involved Counties, Congressional Staff, DES, Farm Bureau and Department of Agriculture as to the final status of their request. Completion of the entire process can take up to six months (see Appendix E).

Producers in those counties designated as drought areas are eligible for assistance from FSA. According to the Emergency Agricultural Credit Act of 1984, producers in contiguous counties are eligible to apply for the same assistance from FSA.